

at once, or the people will begin to inquire not only why that measure is held back, but why Senator Wood remains chairman of the Judiciary Committee, or even why he retains a seat in the State Senate at all.

Congress Yesterday—A Land Grant Fight in the House—Senatorial Franks—Japanese Cadets—The Arms Debate Closed.

At last the muddy stream of debate has dried up in the Senate and Sumner's resolution of inquiry into the sale of arms to the French government has come to a vote. There was not one Senator to stand up for the preamble, and it was laid on the table by a unanimous vote, Edmunds alone voting in the negative, because he wanted to have it killed in a more direct way; but the resolution was adopted by a vote of fifty-two to five, the negative votes being those of Cole, Edmunds, Gilbert, Hamlin and Wright. And so this matter is disposed of. The inquiry, however, has been anticipated by the House, one of whose committees got from Secretary Belknap yesterday all that that official knew about the transaction; and what he did know and testify to does not show any unfair proceeding on the part of the government or any of its officers. On the contrary, everything was done fairly, honorably and above board.

When the House adjourned on Wednesday, after a couple of hours of filibustering over a bill for the renewal of a railroad land grant in Northern Wisconsin, it appeared as if the passage of the bill was a foregone conclusion. Its friends would not allow any debate or any amendment, but, confident of their strength, insisted on the previous question, and were able to carry it. But when the House met yesterday there was a change in the relative strength of the parties for and against the bill. Its friends knew it not, and still persisted in their refusal to permit debate or amendment. But there had been some defection in their ranks since the adjournment on Wednesday, how produced it is needless to inquire, and one who had voted with them moved to reconsider the vote ordering the main question. That motion having been carried—one hundred and one to eighty-three—the bill was thrown open to discussion, and to such motions as its opponents chose to make. For an hour its opponents, Holman, of Indiana; Cox, of New York; Stevenson, of Ohio; Hay, of Illinois, and Speer, of Pennsylvania, had it all to themselves, and went over the usual arguments against railroad land grants and in favor of retaining the public domain for actual settlers and for distribution to soldiers through land warrants. Then, without giving its supporters any opportunity to reply to these arguments, Holman moved to lay the bill on the table, and came within one vote of carrying that motion. Its friends then, by parliamentary usage, again got the game in their own hands, and stated, through Beck, Banks, Eldridge and others, the strong points in its favor. Finally, after another unsuccessful motion to lay the bill on the table, its opponents succeeded in killing it just as effectually by having it referred to the Committee on Public Lands, which committee is opposed to it, and even if it were not would have but a slender chance of reporting it this session.

The circumstances of this land grant fight are peculiar. The original grant, which was made to the State of Wisconsin in 1856, reverted to the government three or four years ago, in consequence of the road not being built—a road from St. Croix Lake to Lake Superior. In the meantime, however, the alternate sections along the projected line of railroad were largely taken up by actual settlers at the enhanced price of two dollars and fifty cents an acre to the government, and the lands to which the railroad company would be entitled were stated in the debate to be worth at this time from fifteen to twenty dollars an acre. The settlers, of course, and the people of the State of Wisconsin, want to have the grant renewed and the road built, and they would certainly appear to have fair play and justice on their side. But just here comes in another element, which, allying itself to those who have, or pretend to have, special regard for the public interests, helped to kill the bill. That element was the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, which is said to be ready, if these lands revert to the government, to gobble them up. It was charged by Beck, of Kentucky, and Banks, of Massachusetts, that Mr. Scott, the President of the Pennsylvania Central Railroad Company, which owns and controls the Northern Pacific Railroad Company, was in Washington and around the Capitol operating against the passage of the bill and making personal appeals to members who had voted for it to change their votes. This was denied by several Pennsylvania members, who protested that Mr. Scott was entirely indifferent in the matter; and one of them went so far as to offer, in proof of Scott's sincerity, to vote for the bill himself, although he had up to that time opposed it. Nevertheless, Banks persisted in his statement in regard to Scott, and engaged in a "bear" operation against the Northern Pacific Railroad bonds by expressing his belief that the road would never be built, and that neither the government nor the people who were investing in its bonds would have any redress or remedy against it. And now the question arises whether the members who so blatantly acted the demagogue yesterday were aware that they were playing into the hands of one of those bloated monopolies against which they rant with such amazing eloquence. It appears evident that, whether knowingly or not, they did so, the defeat of the bill being to the advantage of the Northern Pacific Railroad Company.

It would appear that some irreverent jokers have been playing pranks with grave Senators, and forging their franks to distribute through the mails documents with which such Senators would have no connection. So, under the franks of the orthodox Chandler, of Michigan, and Morton, of Indiana, were distributed circulars calling for a National "Liberal" Republican Convention at Cincinnati, while the sign manual of the Tipton Slasher (liberal republican) was used to frank some of Chandler's speeches. There is a simple way of guarding against such frauds, and that is by members and Senators being honest enough to pay their own postage, like all other decent people.

The bill to admit six Japanese students to the West Point Military Academy was passed yesterday by the Senate, with no apparent opposition except from a Senator from the Pacific coast—Cassidy, of California—who felt bound to oppose it in deference to the hostility of his State to the "Heathen Chinee." We hope the House will amend the bill and do an act of graceful courtesy to our Oriental guests and friends by putting these Japanese youths on the same footing as all other cadets—that is, educating and maintaining them at the expense of the government.

The "Hawkins Mite"—Let It Be the Foundation of a Great Charity. The interest shown in the "Hawkins Mite" increases, and we have all manner of communications from ingenious correspondents as to the proper disposition to be made of the money. As our readers will remember, this ten dollars was sent to an employee of the HERALD by Mr. Dexter A. Hawkins, a pious Unitarian brother, with the intent to bribe him to neglect his duty to the HERALD and give unusual prominence to the sermon of the Rev. Dr. Clarke.

The "Hawkins mite" is a rather dinky ten-dollar bill, which has seen service. On the reverse side is an engraving of "De Soto discovering the Mississippi," copied from one of those fearful works of art which desecrate the walls of the Capitol. De Soto is represented as riding a prancing white horse, and his costume would make a sensation on the Bowery stage. A number of tawny Indians in the background look anxiously upon the Spanish commander and seem to yearn for fire water. Likewise there is a cannon, which De Soto must have had trouble in managing with his limited quartermaster's department, and was a most unnecessary weapon in the Mississippi regions. The "Mite" is marked "National Currency," and we are glad to know it is "secured by the bonds of the United States deposited with the United States Treasurer at Washington." This fact is certified by "S. B. Colby, Register of the Treasury," and the voluble and venerable "F. E. Spinner, Treasurer of the United States," whose execrable signature is clearly given. The "Mite" is issued by "the National State Bank of Oskaloosa of the State of Iowa," an institution which declares that it "will pay ten dollars to bearer on demand." A. C. Williams, the president, and Cyrus Boede, the cashier, give us this further assurance and justify us in saying that the "Mite" rests on first class security. The "Mite" is numbered 594,130 on one corner, and 885 on the other. The question, as Lord Lytton says in his novel, is, "What will we do with it?"

THE ARRIVAL OF THE JAPANESE EMBASSY at Washington, which we record to-day, is an event the importance of which it would be wrong to underestimate. It marks an era in the civilization of Japan and a proud position in our own progress which must bring a lively throb to those who have sympathies with the advance of mankind all over the world in the path of brotherhood. It marks the breaking down of the hoary walls of isolation with the tide of grand and bold ideas flowing in like the fanning waters of the Nile, overflowing the sun-parched banks. In these sober, earnest gentlemen from the empire of the Mikado we can see, with that peculiar gratification which arises from a sense of being copied in anything, a body of practical and philosophic students of the cause of our greatness and their adaptability to the ingenious and cultivated people of Japan. Elsewhere in our columns will be found a full and interesting account of the history of Japan for the last three hundred years, so far as it relates to contact with the Caucasian race. Therein, too, will be observed that we, as a people, have been foremost in setting them the example of good faith in international dealing on which all subsequent treaties with outside Powers have been modelled. We can look back to the outbreak of fanaticism which extinguished in blood the flame of Christianity lit by Francis Xavier and his followers with a feeling of triumph in our day that the great, rich, dim country known to Marco Polo as Cipango has broken down of its own accord the barriers of pride and narrow hate that kept it aloof from the glories and comforts of Christian civilization. We welcome the Embassy.

SENATOR HENRY C. MURPHY has a reputation at stake which he should not suffer to be stained by contact with the filth of the Erie Ring. He is an able man and can do much, as a member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, to force a speedy report on the bill to repeal the Erie Classification act. Will Senator Murphy justify the confidence placed in him by defeating the plot of the Erie conspirators and compelling his committee to report the bill at once?

THE GRAND DUKE ALEXIS has arrived in Havana and met with a grand reception by Captain General Valmaseda and the inhabitants of the city. The most elaborate and costly preparations had been made for the occasion, as described in the letter from our Havana correspondent. The Dons have profited by the example of New York in their hospitalities to the Northern stranger.

Personal Intelligence. Bishop J. J. Conroy, of Albany, is at the Everett House. General Jason Kilpatrick, of New Jersey, is at the Sturtevant House. Ex-Congressman Roswell Hart, of Rochester, is stopping at the Gilsey House. Ex-Governor James E. English, of Connecticut, is sojourning at the St. Nicholas Hotel. General S. E. Marvin, of Albany, has quarters at the New York Hotel. General Benham, of the United States Army, has taken quarters at the Grand Central Hotel. Ex-Governor J. Gregory Smith, of Vermont, is temporarily at the Brevoort House. Ex-Congressman C. V. Culver, of Pennsylvania, is domiciled at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Ex-Governor William Bross, of Chicago, is among the sojourners at the St. Nicholas Hotel. General W. H. Tibbitts, of Troy, has arrived at the Gilsey House. Dr. J. G. Gilling, of Hartford, is staying at the Hoffman House. R. M. Pomeroy, President of the Central Pacific Railroad, is at the Grand Central Hotel. Ex-Congressman H. E. Woodbridge, of Vermont, is domiciled at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Ex-Congressman Alfred Ely, of Rochester, is at the Fifth Avenue Hotel. Mr. Ely was one of the Congressmen who were made prisoners by the rebels, while making their way to Washington from where they had been viewing the battle of Bull Run. George Dolby, of England, manager of the Dolby-Santier concert troupe, is at the Everett House.

THE ERIE RAILWAY. Herald Special Report from London. Exposition of the Case of the English Stockholders. They Will Not Support the Gould Management Nor Make Any Bargains with Gould. The Classification Act, Registry and Transfer of Shares, Transatlantic "Rings" and Other Grievances. Erie Has Disgraced America in the Financial World. WHAT WOULD FOLLOW FROM REFORM. Honesty, Punctuality and Economy to the Public. No Sacrifice of Erie Interests to the Atlantic and Great Western. TELEGRAM TO THE NEW YORK HERALD. The following despatch to the HERALD has been received from our correspondent in the capital of Great Britain:— LONDON, Feb. 29, 1872. The following is in substance the result of an interview which I have had with a leading English director of the Erie Railroad:— Prominent English holders of stock in the Erie Railroad Company assert that they never will accept any arrangement in the nature of a bargain with Gould, and that they will not accept the responsibility of Erie affairs administration with Gould included. The Classification Act legislation attracts attention among them. It is regarded as the greatest piece of roguery ever attempted in America, and excites the severest reprobation. But this is not the worst point. While under many circumstances the repeal would be unwise, impolitic and unnecessary, it is clearly seen that such repeal is the only way of reaching the citadel of the Erie bandits. The clamor against it is, the friends of the "Ring" here would have us believe, a piece of strategy of Gould for the purpose of diverting attention elsewhere. The strong point in the act is that it is a copy of the act which is in force in England governing railways of similar incorporation, and that under it the companies contrived to prevent sudden and complete changes in the direction and the seizure of their property by a financial coup de main. In this instance it has been employed by rogues, and railroad men doubt if it possesses efficient provisions of security for owners, even if worked in the hands of honest men. The grandest iniquity of all is that bona fide owners of shares cannot get them registered in their own names on the books of the company, and, therefore, cannot vote at the elections held for the choosing of directors, who will have plenary powers over their property. They may own a million of shares, but thus have no authority. A man buys shares and finds on them the name of Gould or of some creature of his. The buyer can change this only by changing the books of the company. Until they are changed the bearer of another name votes. The actual holder of the shares has no rights over the management of his own property. This point is the one most reprobated in Europe. The essence of all the enormous villainy of Erie is, that of a capital of eighty millions of dollars sixty millions of dollars have been added by Gould. This nominal increase of capital is not an evil under one form of expression as to the increased value of the property; but the increase must go to the owners in case the Erie increase is diverted to enrich scoundrels and demoralize the financial world in America. A CHEERING PROSPECT—THE OTHER SIDE. Should the Erie Railroad come into the hands of an English direction by the stockholders it will be worked on legitimate principles, with the view to develop its great capabilities in the interest of the owners of shares and the people from whom it received its corporate franchise. All "rings" will be cut away. Forty ingeniously organized "rings" now absorb the earnings, and the road is practically worked by contract, and not by the company's men. These "rings" contractors are parasites, who flourish on what should go the shareholders. The first result of a rightful management of the Erie, with an economical reduction in the administration of its finances, will be the reduction of the rates of maintenance in America to a fixed figure, so that farmers and grain contractors will know what to count on. A reduction in fares will enable workmen to go from New York to St. Louis for six dollars. The statement which has been put forth, that the Erie will be sacrificed to the interests of the Atlantic and Great Western Railway, is nonsense. Their interests are identical, as

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QUEEN VICTORIA.

Sudden and Alarming Attempt to Assassinate Her Majesty.

She is Assailed in Her Carriage and Struck in the Breast with a Pistol.

Prince Arthur Knocks the Russian Down.

Arrest of Alfred O'Connor and His Explanation of Intent.

Profound Sensation and Intense Excitement in London.

Ministerial Statements to Parliament.

The Queen Calm and Collected at the Critical Moment.

TELEGRAMS TO THE NEW YORK HERALD.

LONDON, Feb. 29—Evening. A miscreant this afternoon assaulted Queen Victoria while driving on Constitution Hill, but happily without effect. The would-be assassin and regicide was promptly arrested.

THE LATEST PARTICULARS.

Name and Intent of the Assassin.

LONDON, Feb. 29—Midnight. As the Queen was returning to the court yard at Buckingham Palace, after a drive through the park to-day, Alfred O'Connor, a Fenian, eighteen years of age, sprang over the walls, rushed up to the carriage and struck the Queen on the breast with an unloaded pistol, at the same time presenting a petition of amnesty for the Fenians, exclaiming "Sign or die!"

HIS APPROACH AND MODE OF ASSAULT.

The fellow in one hand held papers granting a release to the Fenian prisoners, which he shouted to the Queen to sign, threatening her at the same time with the pistol. He was instantly seized by the attendants and prevented from doing further harm. It was then found that the pistol was unloaded and that it was of such primitive construction that if it had been loaded it probably could not have been discharged.

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HIS ARREST AND COMMITMENT. O'Connor was seized and conveyed to prison.

PERSONAL BEARING OF THE QUEEN.

Her Majesty the Queen was very calm, and showed the courage which she has often before exhibited.

She directed that a statement of the circumstances be immediately made in both Houses of Parliament in order to prevent exaggerated rumors.

EXCITEMENT OF THE PRISONER. The Queen was perfectly calm. When O'Connor was questioned he said his design was to frighten the Queen into doing justice to Ireland.

CITY EXCITEMENT IN LONDON.

The excitement to-night over the report of an attempt on the life of the Queen is intense. Extras of the evening papers appeared in rapid succession as the confirmatory details became known. Crowds are still collected in the streets discussing the news and awaiting further particulars.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT.

An official statement of the facts was promptly made in Parliament this evening, which, when it became known outside, greatly relieved the public anxiety.

While the House of Lords was in committee, discussing the Ecclesiastical Bill, Lord Granville entered, and said he hoped their Lordships would excuse the sudden interruption of proceedings, but he "had an announcement to make which it was desirable should be made without delay." He then proceeded to state that at half-past five o'clock this evening the Queen, returning from a drive, had reached Buckingham Palace. As her carriage stopped at the gate, a young man ran to the side and presented a pistol within a foot of the Queen's head. The Queen bent her head down to avoid the shot, but the pistol did not explode.

Lord Granville said he would not dwell on the details nor point to the contrast between the dastardly act and Tuesday's extraordinary exhibition of the nation's loyalty. The Duke of Buckingham briefly expressed the thankfulness of the House at the escape of Her Majesty from danger.